MR. PUNCH'S PRIZE NOVELS.

No. VI.—THRUMS ON THE AULD STRING.

(*By* J. Muir Kirrie, *Author of "A Door on Thumbs," "Eight Bald Fiddlers," "When a Man Sees Double," "My Gentleman Meerschaum," &c.*

[With this story came a glossary of Scotch expressions. We have referred to it as we went along, and found everything quite intelligible. As, however, we have no room to publish the glossary, we can only appeal to the indulgence of our readers. The story itself was written in a very clear, legible hand, and was enclosed in a wrapper labelled, "Arcadia Mixture. Strength and Aroma combined. Sold in Six-shilling cases. Special terms for Southrons. Liberal allowance for returned empties."]

Chapter I.

We were all sitting on the pig-sty at T'nowhead's Farm. A pig-sty is not, perhaps, a strictly eligible seat, but there were special reasons, of which you shall hear something later, for sitting on this particular pig-sty.

The old sow was within, extended at full length. Occasionally she grunted approval of what was said, but, beyond that, she seemed to show but a faint interest in the proceedings. She had been a witness of similar gatherings for some years, and, to tell the truth, they had begun to bore her, but, on the whole, I am not prepared to deny that her appreciation was an intelligent one. Behind us was the brae. Ah, that brae! Do you remember how the child you once were sat in the brae, spinning the peerie, and hunkering at I-dree I-dree I droppit-it? Do you remember that? Do you even know what I mean? Life is like that. When we are children the bread is thick, and the butter is thin; as we grow to be lads and lassies, the bread dwindles, and the butter increases; but the old men and women who totter about the commonty, how shall they munch when their teeth are gone? That's the question. I'm a Dominie. What!—no answer? Go to the bottom of the class, all of you.

Chapter II.

As I said, we were all on the pig-sty. Of the *habitués* I scarcely need to speak to you, since you must know their names, even if you fail to pronounce them. But there was a stranger amongst us, a stranger who, it was said, had come from London. Yesterday when I went ben the house I found him sitting with Jess; to-day, he too, was sitting with us on the pig-sty. There were tales told about him, that he wrote for papers in London, and stuffed his vases and his pillows with money, but Tammas Haggart only shook his head at what he called "such auld fowks' yeppins," and evidently didn't believe a single word. Now Tammas, you must know, was our humorist. It was not without difficulty that Tammas had attained to this position, and he was resolved to keep it. Possibly he scented in the stranger a rival humorist whom he would have to crush. At any rate, his greeting was not marked with the usual genial cordiality characteristic of Scotch weavers, and many were the anxious looks exchanged amongst us, as we watched the preparations for the impending conflict.

Chapter III.

After Tammas had finished boring half-a-dozen holes in the old sow with his sarcastic eye, he looked up, and addressed Hendry McQumpha.

"Hendry," he said, "ye ken I'm a humorist, div ye no?"

Hendry scratched the old sow meditatively, before he answered.

"Ou ay," he said, at length. "I'm no saying 'at ye're no a humorist. I ken fine ye're a sarcesticist, but there's other humorists in the world, am thinkin."

This was scarcely what Tammas had expected. Hendry was usually one of his most devoted admirers. There was an awkward silence which made me feel uncomfortable. I am only a poor Dominie, but some of my happiest hours had been passed on the pig-sty. Were these merry meetings to come to an end? Pete took up the talking.

"Hendry, my man," he observed, as he helped himself out of Tammas's snuff-mull, "ye're ower kyow-owy. Ye ken humour's a thing 'at spouts out o' its ain accord, an' there's no nae spouter in Thrums 'at can match wi' Tammas."

He looked defiantly at Hendry, who was engaged in searching for coppers in his north-east-by-east-trouser pocket. T'nowhead said nothing, and Hookey was similarly occupied. At last, the stranger spoke.

"Gentlemen," he began, "may I say a word? I may lay claim to some experience in the matter. I travel in humour, and generally manage to do a large business."

He looked round interrogatively. Tammas eyed him with one of his keen glances. Then he worked his mouth round and round to clear the course for a sarcasm.

"So you're the puir crittur," said the stone-breaker, "'at's meanin' to be a humorist."

This was the challenge. We all knew what it meant, and fixed our eyes on the stranger.

"Certainly," was his answer; "that is exactly my meaning. I trust I make myself plain. I'm willing to meet any man at catch-weights. Now here," he continued, "are some of my samples. This story about a house-boat, for instance, has been much appreciated. It's almost in the style of Mr. Jerome's masterpiece; or this screamer about my wife's tobacco-pipe and the smoking mixture. "Observe," he went on, holding the sample near to his mouth, "I can expand it to any extent. Puff, puff! Ah! it has burst. No matter, these accidents sometimes happen to the best regulated humorists. Now, just look at these," he produced half-a-dozen packets rapidly from his bundle. "Here we have a packet of sarcasm—equal to dynamite. I left it on the steps of the Savile Club, but it missed fire somehow. Then here are some particularly neat things in cheques. I use them myself to paper my bedroom. It's simpler and easier than cashing them, and besides," adjusting his mouth to his sleeve, and laughing, "it's quite killing when you come to think of it in that way. Lastly, there's this banking-account sample, thoroughly suitable for journalists and children. You see how it's done. I open it, you draw on it. Oh, you don't want a drawing-master, any fellow can do it, and the point is it never varies. Now," he concluded, aggressively, "what have you got to set against that, my friend?"

We all looked at Tammas. Hendry kicked the pail towards him, and he put his foot on it. Thus we knew that Hendry had returned to his ancient allegiance, and that the stranger would be crushed. Then Tammas began——

"Man, man, there's no nae doubt at ye lauch at havers, an' there's mony 'at lauchs 'at your clipper-clapper, but they're no Thrums fowk, and they canna' lauch richt. But we maun juist settle this matter. When we're ta'en up wi' the makkin' o' humour, we're a' dependent on other fowk to tak' note o' the humour. There's no nane o' us 'at's lauched at anything you've telt us. But they'll lauch at me. Noo then," he roared out, "'A pie sat on a pear-tree.'"

We all knew this song of Tammas's. A shout of laughter went up from the whole gathering. The stranger fell backwards into the sty a senseless mass.

"Man, man," said Hookey to Tammas, as we walked home; "what a crittur ye are! What pit that in your heed?"

"It juist took a grip o' me," replied Tammas, without moving a muscle; "it flashed upon me 'at he'd no stand that auld song. That's where the humour o' it comes in."

"Ou, ay," added Hendry, "Thrums is the place for rale humour."

On the whole, I agree with him.

Suggestive.—*My Musical Experiences*, by Bettina Walker, will probably be followed by *My Eye*, by Bettina Martin.

THE YOUNG SPARK AND THE OLD FLAME.

Young Spark. "TRY ME! YOU 'VE TOLERATED THAT FUSTY OLD FOGEY LONG ENOUGH!"
Old Flame (aside). "FLASHY YOUNG UPSTART!"

["It is obvious that small tunnels for single lines, of the usual standard gauge, may be constructed some distance below the ground, and yet the atmosphere of such tunnels be as pure as upon a railway on the surface."—*Illustrated London News, on the City & South London Electric Company.*]

"Young Spark" loquitur:—

YOUR arm, my dear Madam! *This* way, down the lift, Ma'am!
No danger at all, no discomfort, no dirt!
You love Sweetness and Light? They are both in my gift, Ma'am;
I'll prove like a shot what I boldly assert.
Don't heed your Old Flame, Ma'am, he's bitterly jealous,
'Tis natural, quite, with his nose out of joint;
You just let him bluster and blow like old bellows,
And try *me* instead—*I* will not disappoint!
Old Flame? He's a very fuliginous "Flame," Ma'am;
I wonder, I'm sure, how you've stood him so long;
He has choked you for years—'tis a thundering shame, Ma'am!
High time the Young Spark put a term to his wrong.
Just look at me! Am I not trim, smart, and sparkling,
As clean as a pin, and as bright as a star?
Compare me with him, who stands scowling and darkling! [VAR.
So gazed the old gallant on Young LOCHIN-
He's ugly and huffy, and smoky, and stuffy,
And pokey, and chokey, and black as my hat.
As wooer he's dull, for his breath smells of sulphur;
Asphyxia incarnate, and horrid at that!
You *cannot* see beauty in one who's so sooty,
So dusty, and dingy, and dismal, and dark.
He's feeble and footy; 'tis plainly your duty
To "chuck" the Old Flame, and take on the Young Spark.
A Cyclops for lover, no doubt you discover,
My dear Lady LONDON, is not *comme il faut;*
If I do not woo you the sunny earth over,
At least I lend light to love-making below.

He's just like old Pluto, Persephone's prigger;
You'll follow Apollo the Younger—that's me!
He's sombre as Styx, and as black as a nigger.
His lady-love, London! Bah! Fiddle-de-dee!

His murky monopoly, Madam, is ended.
Come down, my dear love, to my subterrene hall!
I think you'll admit it is sparkling and splendid,
As clean as a palace, not black as a pall.
Electrical traction with sheer stupefaction
Strikes Steam, the old buffer, and spoils his small game.
You're off with the old Love, so try the new bold Love,
And let the Young Spark supersede the Old Flame.

[*Carries her off in triumph.*

PARS ABOUT PICTURES.

Close upon a hundred years ago, when George the Third was King, Mendoza opened a saloon in the Strand, whereat various studies in Black and Blue might be enjoyed. To-day Mendoza has a gallery in King Street, which is devoted to studies in Black and White. You may say, history repeats itself. Nothing of the kind. The gentleman of George the Third's time devoted himself to the pugilistic art; the gentleman of the time of Victoria gives his attention to graphic art. The one was the patron of fists, the other of fingers—that makes all the difference. Mendoza the Past, closed eyes—Mendoza the Present opens them, and, if you go to the St. James's Gallery, you will find a pleasant collection of Eye Art—open to all peepers. It is true it may not be High Art, but you will find it, like Epps's Cocoa, "grateful and comforting."

Mr. McLean, who has had an Art-show in the Haymarket since the days of George the Third, or rather his ancestor had, is "quite up to time, and smiling," with his present collection (your Old Par can't help using the argot of the P.R., and brings Coal, not to Newcastle, but to the Haymarket, in "*A Bend in the River, near Maple Durham.*" He shows us the views of Burton Barber on "*Compulsory Education*," also a wondrous picture of the "*Gate of the Great Mosque of Damascus*," by Bauernfeind, "*A Venetian Brunette*," by Fildes, and many other works that will well repay inspection, but of which there is no space for anything more to be said by yours par-enthetically,

Old Par.

THE GENTLE ART (OF SNIGGLING).

["Whoever walks beside the river (the Ettrick), will observe five or six or more men and boys, equipped with gigantic wading-breeches, busy in each pool. They are only armed with rods and flies, and thus have a false appearance of being fair fishers. . . . The truth is that the apparent sportsmen are sniggers, not anglers. They drive the top part of their rods deep into the water, so as to rake the bottom, and then bring the hook out with a jerk. Every now and then . . . one of the persecuted fishes . . . is hauled out with short shrift."—*Daily News.*]

Oh! the world's very bad, and our hearts they are sore
As we think of the errors and wrongs we have got to
Endure uncomplaining, and oh! we deplore
The things people do, that they really ought not to!
With Courtesy dead, and with Justice "a-bed,"
When the mention of Love only causes a giggle,—
But we'd manage to live and still hold up our head,
Were it not for the villain who ventures to sniggle.

With his rod and his hook see him carefully rake
The bed of the river, and gallantly wading,
Arrayed in his breeches, endeavour to make
Of genuine sport but a mere masquerading.
You might think him a fool for his trouble—but look!
(And it's true, though at first it appears to be gammon)
With a horrible jerk, as he pulls up his hook,
The sportsmanlike sniggler has landed a salmon!

As a nation of sportsmen, it rouses our ire
To hear of sport ruined by such a proceeding;
And to sniggelers we earnestly wish and desire
To give the advice they so sadly seem needing.
Let them think, as they work their inglorious plan,
How old Izaak must turn in his grave and must wriggle;
And may they in future all see if they can,
By learning to angle, forget how to sniggle!

IN OUR GARDEN.

Discovered on returning home that the Member for Sark had not at all exaggerated the facts picturing disaster to our onion-bed. This portion of the garden had been disappointing from the first. Early in the Spring, when hope beat high, and the young gardener's fancy lightly turned to thoughts of large crops, Sark and I were resting after a frugal luncheon, when Arpachshad suddenly appeared at the open window. I knew from his beaming face that something was wrong.

Perhaps I should explain that Arpachshad is our head gardener. We have no other, therefore he is the head. Out of the garden he is known as Peter Wallops. It was Sark who insisted upon calling him Arpachshad. Sark had noticed that about the time of the Flood there was singular deliberation in entering upon the marriage state. Matrimony did not seem to be thought of till a man had turned the corner of a century. Shem, himself, for example, was fully a hundred before his third son, Arpachshad, was born. But Arpachshad was already a husband and a father at thirty-five.

"That," said Sark, "is a remarkable circumstance that has escaped the notice of the commentators. It indicates unusual forwardness of character and a habit of swift decision. We hear nothing more of Arpachshad, but we may be sure he made things move. Now what we want in this garden is a brisk man, a fellow always up to date, if not ahead of it. Let us encourage Wallops by calling him Arpachshad."

Wallops on being consulted said, he thought it ought to be a matter of another two shillings a-week in his wages; to which I demurred, and it was finally compromised on the basis of a rise of a shilling a-week. As far as I have observed, Sark's device, like many others he has put forward, has nothing in it. Wallops couldn't be slower in going round than is Arpachshad. The only time he ever displays any animation is when he discovers some fresh disaster. When things are going well (which isn't often) he is gloomy and apprehensive of an early change for the worse. When the worst comes he positively beams over it. Difficult to say whether he enjoys himself more in an over-wet season, or in one of drought. His special and ever-recurring joy is the discovery of some insect breaking out in a fresh place. He is always on the look-out for the Mottled Amber Moth, or the Frit-fly, or the Currant Scale, or the Apple-bark Beetle, or the Mustard Beetle,—"Black Jack," as he familiarly calls him. To see, as is not unfrequent, a promising apple-tree, cherry-tree, or damson-tree, fading under the attack of the caterpillars of the Winter Moth, makes Arpachshad a new man. His back unbends, his wrinkles smooth out, the gleam of faded youth reilluminés his countenance, and his eyes melt in softer glance.

"The flies hev got at them honions," he said, on this Spring afternoon. "I thought they would, and I reckon they're done for. Ever seen a honion-fly, Sir? A nice, lively, busy-looking thing; pretty reddish-grey coat, with a whitish face, and pale grey wings. About this time of the year it lays its eggs on the sheath of the onion-leaf, and within a week you've got the larvey burrowing down into the bulb; after which, there's hardly any hope for your honion."

"Can nothing be done to save them?" Sark asked. As for me, I was too down-hearted to speak.

"Well," said Arpachshad, ruefully, not liking the prospect of interfering with beneficent Nature, "if you was to get a bag of soot, wait about till a shower was a coming on, carefully sprinkle the plant, and let the soot wash in, *that*

might save a few here and there. Or if you were to get a can of paraffin, and syringe them, it would make the fly sit up. But I don't know as how it's worth the trouble. Nater will have its way, and, if the fly wants the honion, who are we that we should say it nay? I think, TOBY, M.P., if I was you, I'd let things take their swing. It's a terrible thing to go a interfering with Nater."

But we didn't follow ARPACHSHAD's advice. Having undertaken to run this garden, we were determined to do it thoroughly; so I got SARK to sweep out the flues of the furnace in the greenhouse, in the course of which he broke several panes of glass, not expecting, so he explained, to find the handle of his brush so near the roof. We half filled a sack with soot, and carried it to the onion-bed. Then we waited for a wet day, usually plentiful enough in haymaking time, now long deferred. ARPACHSHAD insisted that we were to make quite sure that rain was coming—then sprinkle the soot over the unsuspectiong onion. We waited just too long, not starting till the rain began to fall. Found it exceedingly unpleasant handling the soot under conditions of moisture. But, as SARK said, having put our hands to the soot-bag, we were not going to turn back. Nor did we till we had completed the task, ARPACHSHAD looking on, cheered only by the hope that the heavy rain would wash the soot off before it could have any effect on the fly. On the whole, the task proved productive of reward. Either ARPACHSHAD had been mistaken, and the crop had not been attacked by the fly, or the soot had done its work. Anyhow, the bed bloomed and blossomed, and, at the time I left for Midlothian, was looking exceedingly well. Then came SARK's telegram, as described in the last chapter. A ter the fly came the mildew. Close on the heels, or rather the wings, of the *Anthomyia Ceparum*, foll the *Peronospora Schleideniana*.

"It isn't often it happens," said ARPACHSHAD, rubbing his hands gleefully;—"but, when you get one on the top of t'other, you don't look for much crop in that particular year."

HOW IT'S DONE.

A Hand-book to Honesty.

[No. V.—MONEY LENT (ONE WAY AMONG MANY.)

SCENE I.—*Apartment of innocent but temporarily impecunious person.*

I. P. *discovered reading advertisements and correspondence.*

Impecunious Person. Humph! It *sounds* all right. I *have* heard that these Loan-mongers are sometimes scoundrels and sharks. But this one is surely genuine. There is a manly frankness, a sort of considerate and sympathetic delicacy about him, that quite appeals to one. No inquiry fees, no publicity, no delay! Just what I want. Has clients, men of capital, but *not* speculators, who wish to invest money on sound security at reasonable interest. Just so! Note of hand of any respectable person sufficient. *That's* all right. Advance at a few hours' notice. Excellent! Let me see, the address is Fitz-Guelph Mansions, W. That sounds respectable enough. A penniless shark would hardly live *there*. By Jove, I'll write, and make an appointment *at his own address*, as he suggests.

[*Does so, hopefully.*

SCENE II.—*Fitz-Guelph Mansions, W., at* 11 A.M. *Enter* Impecunious Person, *hurriedly.*

Impecunious Person. Ah! I'm a little bit late, but here's the place sure enough, and that's the number. Fine house, too. Nothing sharkish about *this*, anyhow.

[*Makes for No.* 14, *consulting his watch. On door-step encounters another person, also apparently in a hurry, and also consulting his watch. This person is perhaps a trifle shabby-genteel in attire, but genially pompous and semi-military in bearing. He makes as if to go, but stopping suddenly, stares at* I. P., *and addresses him.*—

Ahem! I—a—beg pardon, I'm sure, but have you by any chance an appointment for 11 A.M. at this address, with a Mr. MUGSNAP?

I. P. Why—a—yes, as a matter of fact, I have.

Mr. Mugsnap. Quite so. And your name is SOFTSHELL?

I. P. Well—yes, as a matter of fact, it is.

Mr. Mugsnap (*cheerily*). Ah! that's all right. Well met, Mr. SOFTSHELL! (*Produces letter.*) This is yours, I fancy. The time was eleven sharp, and you're just seven minutes and a quarter behind. I was just off, for if I gave all my clients seven minutes and a quarter grace, I should lose about four hours a day, Sir. (*Laughs jovially.*) But no matter! Just step this way. (*Produces latch-key.*) But no, on second thoughts I won't go back. Unlucky, you know! We'll step across to the Wine Shades yonder, and talk our business over together with a glass of sound port, my boy. Best glass of port in London, BUMPUS sells, and as an old Army Man I appreciate it.

[*They cross to "The Shades," where* Mr. MUGSNAP *wins upon his companion by his hearty style, and all difficulties in the way of "an early advance" are smoothed away in a highly satisfactory manner. A couple of references, of course, "just as a matter of form," and a couple of guineas for visiting them. Not an Inquiry Fee, oh! dear no, merely "expenses." Some people apply for a loan, and, when everything is arranged, actually decline to receive it! Must provide against* that, *you know. Within three days at the outside,* Mr. SOFTSHELL *is assured, that money will be in his hands without fail. Meanwhile the "couple o' guineas" leave his hands, and* Mr. MUGSNAP *leaves* him, *hopeful, and admiring.*

I. P. (*strolling homeward*). Very pleasant person, Mr. MUGSNAP. Quite a pleasure to deal with him. Sharks, indeed! How worthy people get misrepresented! By the way, though, there's one question I forgot to ask him. I'll just step back. Don't suppose he has gone yet.

[*Returns to No.* 14, *Fitz-Guelph Mansions. Knocks, and is answered by smart and austere-looking Domestic.*

I. P. Oh, just tell Mr. MUGSNAP I should like just *one* word more with him. Won't detain him a moment.

Austere Domestic. Mr. MUGSNAP! And who's Mr. MUGSNAP, pray? Don't know any such persing.

I. P. Oh yes, he lives here. Met him, by appointment, only an hour ago. Hasn't he returned?

A. D. (*emphatically*). I tell you there ain't no Mr. MUGSNAP lives here at all.

I. P. Oh *dear*, yes! Stout gentleman—military appearance—white waistcoat!

A. S. (*scornfully*). Oh, *him!* I saw such a party 'anging about suspiciously awhile ago, and *spoke to the perliceman about him.* But I don't know him, and he don't live *here!* [*Shuts door sharply.*

I. P. (*perspiring profusely, as the state of things dawns upon him.*) Phew! I see it all. "A plant." *That's* why he met me on the door-step. Of course he doesn't live here at all. Gave a respectable address, and *watched for me outside!* And the sleek-spoken shark is gone! So are my two guineas!

[*Retires a sadder, and a wiser man.*

THE MAN OF SCIENCE.

[It has been suggested, with reference to an amusing article in *Blackwood*, on a new religion, that science is equal to it.]

PROFESSOR PROTOPLASM *sings:*—

I'M a mighty man of science, and on that I place reliance,
And I hurl a stern defiance at what other people say:
Learning's torch I fiercely kindle, with my HAECKEL, HUXLEY, TYNDALL,
And all preaching is a swindle, that's the motto of to-day.
I'd give the wildest latitude to each agnostic attitude,
And everything's a platitude that springs not from my mind:
I've studied entomology, astronomy, conchology,
And every other 'ology that anyone can find.
I am a man of science, with my bottles on the shelf,
I'm game to make a little world, and govern it myself.

I'm a demon at dissection, and I've always had affection
For a curious collection from both animals and man:
I've a lovely pterodactyle, some old bones a little cracked, I'll
Get some mummies, and in fact I'll pounce on anything I can.'
I'm full of lore botanical, and chemistry organical,
I oft put in a panic all the neighbours I must own: [phorus:
They smell the fumes and phosphorus from London to the Bos-
Oh, sad would be the loss for us, had I been never known.
I am a man of science, with my bottles on the shelf;
I'm game to make a little world, and govern it myself.

OUR OTHER "WILLIAM."—Question by the G.O.M. on quitting the North,—"Stands Scotland where it did?"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

READ *The World and the Will*, by JAMES PAYN, says the Baron. Successful novelist is our "J. P." for England and the Colonies generally. "The profits blazoned on the Payn," is a line he quotes, with a slight difference of spelling, in his present three volumes, which is full of good things; his own "asides" being, to my thinking, quoth the Baron, by far the most enjoyable part of his books. Herein he resembles THACKERAY, who used to delight in taking the reader behind the scenes, and exhibiting the wires. Not so JAMES PAYN. He comes in front, and comments upon the actions of his puppets, or upon men and morals in general, or he makes a quip, or utters a quirk, or proposes a quiddity, and pauses to laugh with you, before he resumes the story, and says, with the older romancers, "But to our tale." Most companionable writer is JAMES PAYN. Tells his story so clearly. A PAYN to be seen through.

In the christening of his Christmas books, Mr. MERRY ANDREW LANG has hit upon a genuine Happy Thought, on which the Baron begs sincerely to congratulate him. It is a perfect little gold mine as a book-title series. Last year M. ANDREW LANG wrote, and LANGMAN'S—no, beg pardon—LONGMANS published *The Blue Fairy Book*. The *Blue Fairy Book*, when it appeared, however, was read everywhere, so this year the MERRY ANDREW issues *The Red Fairy Book*, which, of course, will be more read than the other. Excellent notion! Where will it stop? Why should it stop? Next year there'll be *The Green Fairy Book*; in '92 the *Yellow Fairy Book* (commencing with new version of *Yellow Dwarf*), then the White, then the Black, then the Ver-millionth edition, and so on and so on, *ad infinitum*, through all the possible stages of the combination and permutation of colour.

The Magazine of Art for 1890, published by CASSELL & Co., is one of the best of its kind for pictures and Art-articles. The Mixture as before.

"Christmas is coming"—but the Publishers seem to think that the Merry Old Gentleman will be here to-morrow. Yet we know the proverbial history of to-morrow. However, to humour the up-to-date notion, the Baron recommends to his young friends who wish to amuse their elders, *Dolldom*, a dolls' opera, by CLIFTON BINGHAM, set to music by FLORIAN PASCAL. Some of the songs are exquisite. It would make a very funny play, children imitating dolls. Published by J. WILLIAMS.

BLACKIE AND SON, are going it. Here are two more, by their indefatigable writer, G. A. HENTY: *By Right of Conquest; or, With Cortez in Mexico*. The young Sixteenth-Century boy, by his marvellous adventures, proves *his* right to be a hero in the Conquest of Mexico. Of a more modern date is *A Chapter of Accidents*, which deals with the Bombardment of Alexandria. The young fisher-lad has to go through many chapters of adventure before he reaches a happy ending. *A Rough Shaking*, by GEORGE MACDONALD, is a capital boys' book, while *The Light Princess, and other Fairy Stories*, by the same author, will please the Baron's old-fashioned fairy-book readers at Christmas-time.

Whoever possesses the *Henry Irving Shakspeare*,—started originally by my dear old enthusiastic friend the late FRANK MARSHALL, and now concluded by the new volume of plays, poems, and sonnets,—possesses a literary treasure. The notes are varied, interesting, and all valuable. The illustrations exactly serve their purpose, which is the highest praise.

MR. SMALLEY'S Letters are not to an *Inconnus*. They were written to his paper, the *Tribune*, and have redressed the balance between the Old World and the New by furnishing New York from week to week with brilliant, incisive, and faithful pictures of life in London. The initials, "G. W. S.," appended in their original form, are as familiar throughout the United States as are those of our own "G. A. S." in the still United Kingdom. Mr. SMALLEY goes everywhere, sees everything, knows everybody, and his readers in New York learn a great deal more of what is going on in London than some of us who live here. Most public men of the present day, whether in politics, literature, or art, have, all unconsciously, sat to "G. W. S." He has a wonderful gift of seizing the salient points of a character, and reproducing them in a few pellucid sentences. The men he treats of have many friends who will be delighted to find that Mr. SMALLEY'S pen is dipped in just enough gall to make the writing pleasant to those who are not its topic. *Personalities* is the alluring title of the first volume, which contains forty-two studies of character. It is dangerous kind of work; but Mr. SMALLEY has skilfully steered his passage. Written for a newspaper, *London Letters* (MACMILLAN & Co.) rank higher than journalism. They will take their place in Literature.

November Number of the *English Illustrated Magazine*, excellent. Wykehamists, please note Mr. GALE'S article, and Lord SELBORNE'S introduction. The COOKE who presides in this particular kitchen serves up a capital dish every month—and "quite English, you know."

My faithful "Co." has been rather startled by a volume called *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, written by "Anonymous," and published by the Messrs. TRISCHLER. The tome deals with Australia, rather than England, and is dated a thousand years hence; so those who have no immediate leisure will have plenty of time to read it before the events therein recorded, so to speak, reach maturity.

I notice an advertisement of a book by Major ELLIS, entitled *The Ewe-speaking People of the Slave Coast of West Africa*. These Ewe-speaking folk must be a sheepish lot. Black-sheepish lot apparently, as being in West Africa. Major ELLIS is the author also of *The Tshi-speaking People*. These last must be either timidly bashful, or else a very T-shi lot. After this, there's nothing ELLIS this week, says

THE BARON DE BOOK-WORMS.

"QUITE A LITTLE (ROMAN) HOLIDAY."

(An Intercepted Letter.)

DEAREST BECKY,—I have had *such* luck! Oh, *so* fortunate! Fancy, we *did* get in, after all! You know Mr. TENTERFORE, of Somerset House, has a friend a barrister, and this friend said, if we would be by the door of the Court at eleven, he *thought* he could slip us in. And he did, my dear—he did! We got *capital* places, and as we had brought with us some sherry and sandwiches, we had "a real good time of it," as your brother calls it! We had our work, too, and so were *quite* comfortable. The night-charges were *such* fun! A lot of men and women were brought before the Magistrate for being "drunk and incapable" (that's a legal term, my dear), and got so chaffed! One of the women was very old—such a silly frump!—she was still dreadfully intoxicated I am afraid! Very sad, *of course*, but we couldn't help laughing! She was *such* a figure before they got rid of her! But this was only the overture to the drama. After the night-charges were over, the Court was cleared, but we were allowed to remain, as Mr. WIGINBLOCK (our barrister friend) declared we belonged to the Press! He said that MARY contributed to the *Blood and Thunder News*, and I to the *Murder Gazette!* I am sure it must have been in *fun*, for we have never *seen* the papers. When lunch was over, in came the Magistrate with *a number* of the "*smartest*" people! Really, I was *quite delighted* to be in such *good* company. All sorts of *nice* people. And then—oh—it was *lovely!* We saw *her quite* close, and could watch the colour come and go in her cheeks! She is rather pretty! She was wearing her *ordinary* clothes; not the workhouse, nor the ones *with the blood on them*, but some that had been sent in to her since the inquest. I tried your opera-glasses. They are *simply capital*, darling! We were much amused with *his* evidence; and it was really *excellent* fun to listen to the howls of the crowd outside! But I am not sure *he* cared for them! We got away in *excellent* time, and I hope to go again. I am trying *very hard* (should it come to anything) to be present at the *last scene of all!* Wouldn't that be *lovely?* I should have to be at the place, though, at *ten minutes to eight o'clock!* I don't think I should go to bed that night *at all!* If I did, I am *sure* I should not sleep! It would be so very, *very* interesting! And now, my *dearest*, good-bye. Your ever *most* affectionate friend,

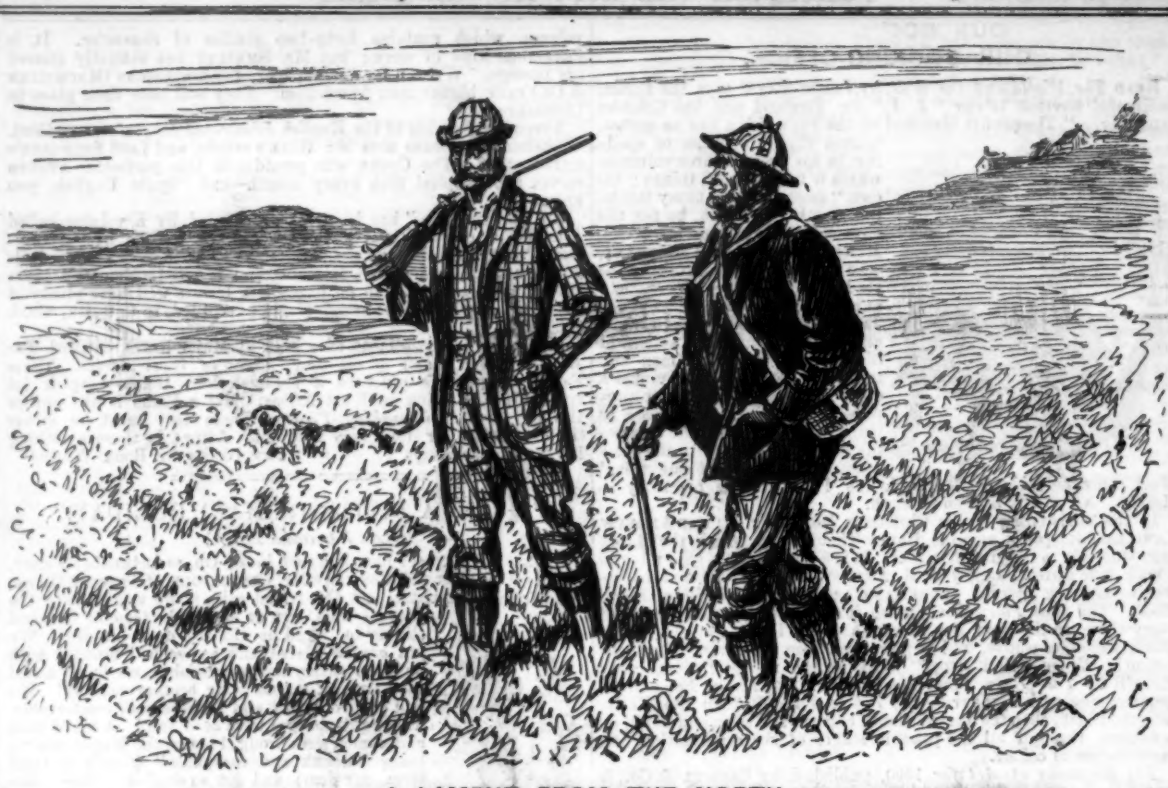
LUCRETIA.

"MINE EASE AT MY CLUB."—In its most useful and instructive theatrical column last Sunday's *Observer* (the only Observer of a Sunday in London!) inserted this notice:—

"Mr. H. A. JONES is to read a paper at the Playgoers' Club, Henrietta Street, Tuesday next."

Why announce it? Why not let the hard-worked HENRY AUTHOR JONES read his paper at his Club in peace and quietness? Very hard on poor HENRY DRAMATIC AUTHOR JONES, if he can't have a few minutes of peace (not "piece," *bien entendu*) to himself. Leave him alone to take his ease at his Club.

UNSATISFACTORY FOR LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS.—At a recent meeting of Anarchists at New Jersey some were arrested, but MOST escaped.



A LAMENT FROM THE NORTH.

"AND THEN THE WEATHER 'S BEEN SO BAD, DONALD!"
"OU AY, SIR. ONLY THREE FINE DAYS—AND TWA OF THEM SNAPPIT UP BY THE SAWBATH!"

THE "LAIDLY WORM" OF LONDON;

Or, The Great Slum Dragon and Little Master County Council.

["The Worm (at first neglected) grew till it was too large for its habitation. . . . It became the terror of the country, and, among other enormities, levied a daily contribution . . . in default of which it would devour both man and beast. . . . Young LAMBTON was extremely shocked at witnessing the effects of his youthful imprudence, and immediately undertook the adventure."—*Legend of "The Lambton Worm," as related by Surtees.*]

OLD stories tell how Hercules
At Lerna slew a "Dragon;"
And the "Lambton Worm" (told by SURTEES)
The Durham men still brag on.
How the "Laidly Worm" was made to squirm
Old legends tell (they *can't* lie!);
And of MORE, of More-hall, when, "with nothing at all,"
He slew the Dragon of Wantley.

Our Dragon here is a bigger beast
Than LAMBTON slew, or MORE did;
On poor men's bodies he doth feast,
And ill-got gold long hoarded.
He hath iron claws, and from his jaws
Foul fumings are emitted.
The folks, his prey, who cross his way,
Are sorely to be pitied.

Have you not heard how the Trojan horse
Held seventy men inside him?
This Dragon 's bigger, and of such force
That none may rein or ride him.

Men hour by hour he doth devour,
And would they with him grapple,
At one big sup he 'll gobble them up,
As schoolboys munch an apple.

All sorts of prey this Dragon doth eat;
But his favourite food 's poor people,
But he 'd swallow a city, street by street,
From cottage to church steeple.
Like the Worm of Wear, this Dragon drear,
Hath grown, and grown, and grown, Sir,
And many a lair of dim despair
The Worm hath made its own, Sir.

In Bethnal Green our Laidly Worm
Hath made a loathly den,
And there hath fed for a weary term
On the bodies and souls of men.
There doth it writhe, and ramp, and glower,
Whilst in its coils close prest [Power,"
Are the things it thrives on—"Landlord
And "Vested Interest."

Now, who shall tackle this Dragon bold?
Lo! a champion appears.
He seems but small, and he looks not old—
A youth of scarce three years.
But "he hath put on his coat of mail,
Thick set with razors all,"
And a blade as big as a thresher's flail,
On that Dragon's crest to fall.

And like young LAMBTON, or young MORE,
He to the fight advances.
Yet looks to that Slum Dragon o'er,
With caution in his glances.
If he make shift that sword to lift,
And smite that Dragon dead,
No hero young song yet hath sung
A fouler pest hath sped.

Now guard ye, guard ye, young County C.!
That two-edged blade is big, Sir!
That Dragon 's so spiky, he well might be
"Some Egyptian porcupig," Sir,
(As the singer of Wantley's Dragon says,
In his quaint and curious story.)
If this Dragon he slays, he shall win men's
And legendary glory. [praise,

When London's streets are haunts of health
(Ah! happy if distant, when)
And the death-rate ruleth low, and Wealth
Feeds not on the filthy den;
The men to this champion's memory
Shall lift the brimming flagon,
And drink with glee to young County C.,
Who slew the Grim Slum Dragon!

A "DARK CONTINENT" HINT.—Mr. STANLEY, it is said, now wishes he had gone on his exploration journey quite alone, without any travelling TROUP. It is a curious fact, but worth mentioning here, that, up to now, the only mention of difficulties with a "Travelling Troupe" is to be found in a little shilling book recently published by Messrs. TRISCHLER & Co., at present nearing its fifty thousandth copy, entitled, *A New Light thrown across the Darkest Africa.* Whether H. M. STANLEY will appeal to this as evidence remains to be seen. We must have the whole truth out about STANLEY'S Rear Column before we rear a column to STANLEY.

THE "NORFOLK BROADS," according to the *Standard*, are in future to be the English cradle of the German "Bass." Not beer, but fish. There are to be "no takers" at present, so the cradle will not be a Bass-in-net.

THE "LAIDLY WORM" OF LONDON—AND YOUNG COUNTY COUNCIL.

HUNTING PREDICAMENTS. No. 1.

Miss Nelly (to her Slave, in the middle of the best thing of the Season). "OH, MR. ROWEL, DO YOU MIND GOING BACK? I DROPPED MY WHIP AT THE LAST FENCE!"

OPERATIC NOTES.

Wednesday.—Welcome once more to our old friend, *Norma, the Deceived Druidess*, who was called *Norma* for short, she being an orphan, and having "nor par, nor ma." The Ancient Order of Druids, with Arch-Druid *Oroveso* in the chair, might have had a better brass band. *Norma* nowadays is not particularly attractive, and the house, when it is given, cannot be expected to be more than normal or ordinary.

Thursday.—*Orfeo.* First appearance of Mlles. GIULIA and SOFIA RAVOGLI in GLÜCK'S beautiful Opera, which has not been seen here for many years, but—judging from its reception by a full and delighted house—will be seen many times before Signor LAGO'S season comes to an end. Enthusiastic reception of GIULIA RAVOGLI as *Orpheus*; double recall after three of the four Acts; house insisting on having "*Che farò*" all over again. Orchestra, under Signor BEVIGNANI, admirable. Recreations of Demons and Furies, when let out of Gates of Erebus for a half-holiday, peculiar, not to say eccentric. Demons lie on rocks, with silver serpents round their necks as comforters, claw the air, and trot round in circles, after which they exhibit Dutch-metalled walking-sticks to one another with sombre pride. Furies trip measures and strike attitudes in pink tights and draperies of unæsthetic hues, when not engaged in witnessing, with qualified interest, incidental dances by two *premières danseuses*. Hades evidently less dull than generally supposed.

SUGGESTION. — Curious that no enterprising shaving-soap proprietor has as yet, as far as we know, advertised his invention as "*Tabula Rasa*." This is worth thousands, and takes the cake—of soap.

QUIS NOMINABIT?

(*Being a few Remarks à propos of a "British Academy of Letters."*)

MR. PUNCH, SIR,

I HAVE been reading with some morbid interest a series of contributions to the pages of a contemporary from several more or less distinguished literary men who have apparently been invited to express their opinions, favourable or the reverse, on the recently launched proposition to establish in our midst, after the French model, a "British Academy of Letters." Some ask, "What's the use?" Others want to know who is to elect the elected, and seem much exercised in their minds as to the status and qualifications of those who ought to be chosen for the purpose of discharging this all-important function. As to what would be the use of an institution of the kind, the answer is so obvious that I will not attempt to reply to it. But if it comes to naming a representative body capable of selecting the two or three thousand aspirants who have already, in imagination, seen their claims to the distinction recognised by the elective body to which has been entrusted the duty of weighing their respective merits—well then, to use a colloquial phrase, I may confidently say that "I am all there!"

Of course, Royalty must head it, so I head the list of, say, twelve Academic Electors, with the name of H.R.H. the Prince of WALES. This should be followed up by that of some generally widely-known personage, who has the literary confidence of the public, and in this connection, I have no hesitation in supplying it by that of the Compiler of *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*. Several now should follow, of varied and even conflicting interests, so as to satisfy any over-captious criticism inclined to question the thoroughly cosmopolitan character of the elective body. And so I next add, Mr. Sheriff AUGUSTUS HARRIS, H.R.H. the Duke of CAMBRIDGE, the Proprietor of PEARS' Soap, and the Beadle of the Burlington Arcade.

It might now be well to give a distinctively literary flavour to the body, and so I am disposed to continue my list with the names of the Poet Laureate and the City Editor of *Tit Bits*, following them up with the representatives of commercial enterprise, speculative art, and sportive leisure, guaranteed respectively by the names of the Chairman of the Chelsea Steam-boat Company, Mr. R. D'OYLY CARTE, and Prince HENRY OF BATTENBERG. For the twelfth, and remaining name, I would suggest that of Mr. HENRY IRVING, the Archbishop of CANTERBURY, the Manager of Madame TUSSAUD'S Wax Works, Sir WILFRID LAWSON, General BOOTH, Mr. SLAVIN, Mr. J. L. TOOLE, or any other striking or notable one that arrests the eye with the familiarity of long acquaintance. With the existing deplorable position of the Pantomime literature of the country, there can be little need to question further the necessity of a British Academy of Letters. The naming of those who are to constitute that institution is another thing; but if an authoritative fountain-head, to discharge this inevitable function, is sought, and the public puts the question, "*Quis Nominabit?*" I think, Sir, you will admit that I have most satisfactorily supplied the answer. Trusting to your judicious appreciation of the full gravity of the matter at issue, to publish this communication,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A VERY POSSIBLE FUTURE ACADEMICIAN.

BEFORE AND BEHIND.

(*From a Thoughtful Grammarian.*)

SIR,—In the *Times'* Court Circular, on Friday last, I read that—

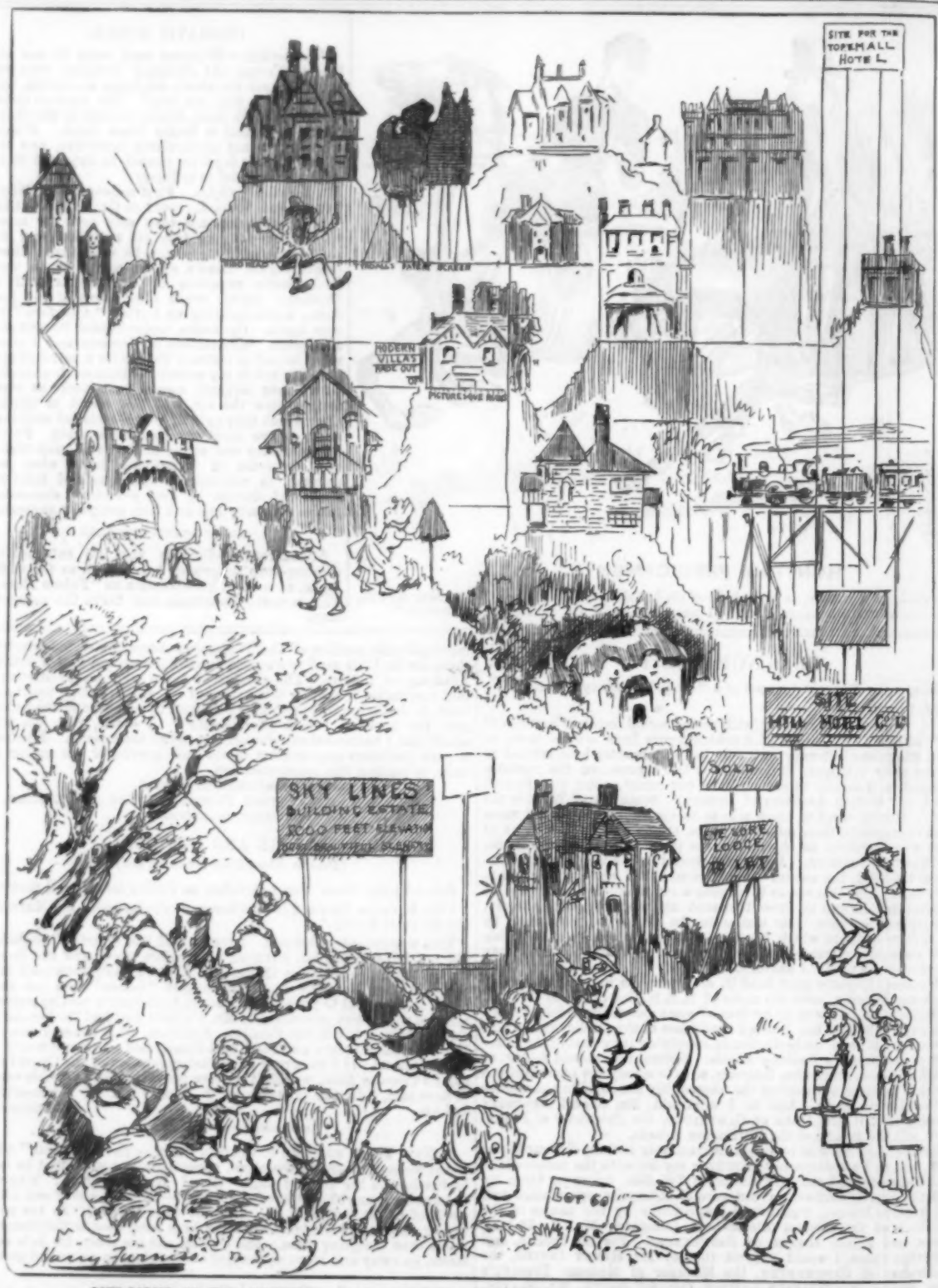
"MR. WILLIAM NICHOLL had the honour of singing before Her MAJESTY and the Royal Family."

This was indeed an honour. I regret that the Courtly Circularist did not tell us what Mr. NICHOLL sang before the QUEEN and Royal Family, and also what the QUEEN and Royal Family sang (solo and chorus?) after Mr. NICHOLL. But suppose "before" does not here relate to time, but to position. It would have been a novelty indeed, and one well worth recording, if Mr. NICHOLL had had the honour of singing *behind* the Royal Family. And then, what a compliment if Her Gracious MAJESTY and the Royal Family had all turned round to listen to him! If I am wrong in my interpretation of the Court Circular's Circular Note, wouldn't it have prevented any possible error to have said, "In the presence of"? I only ask for information, and am

Yours, FIDELITER.

A NEW TRACT FOR THE SALVATION ARMY.—The "General," who is the biggest BOOTH in the show, announced last week that he had been offered a big tract of land. Hear! Hear! Where? Where? "Anywhere, anywhere out of the world"—at least, out of our little world of Great Britain & Co. Let not "the General" be too particular, but accept the tract,—though he is more used to distributing tracts than accepting them,—and let him and his army, his lads and lasses, go away and leave us to enjoy our Sundays in peace and quiet.

NEW CITY FIRM (*adapted from West End by Our Own Scotchman*).—"SAVORY AND MAYOR."



SKY-SIGNS IN THE COUNTRY. (AS SEEN BY OUR ARTIST IN SEARCH OF THE PICTURESQUE.)

VOCES POPULI.

AN EVENING WITH A CONJUROR.

SCENE—*A Suburban Hall. The Performance has not yet begun. The Audience is limited, and low-spirited, and may perhaps number—including the Attendants—eighteen. The only people in the front seats are, a man in full evening dress, which he tries to conceal under a caped cloak, and two Ladies in plush opera-cloaks. Fog is hanging about in the rafters, and the gas-stars sing a melancholy dirge. Each casual cough arouses dismal echoes. Enter an intending Spectator, who is conducted to a seat in the middle of an empty row. After removing his hat and coat, he suddenly thinks better—or worse—of it, puts them on again, and vanishes hurriedly.*

First Sardonic Attendant (*at doorway*). Reg'lar turnin' em away to-night, we are!

Second Sardonic Attendant. He come up to me afore he goes to the pay-box, and sez he—"Is there a seat left?" he sez. And I sez to 'im, "Well, I *think* we can manage to squeeze you in somewhere." Like that, I sez.

[*The Orchestra, consisting of two thin-armed little girls, with pigtails, enter, and perform a stumbling Overture upon a cracked piano.* HERR VON KAMBERWOHL, *the Conjuror, appears on platform, amidst loud clapping from two obvious Confederates in a back row.*

Herr V. K. (*in a mixed accent*). Lydies and Shentilmans, pefoor I co-mence viz my hillusions zis hevenin', I 'ave most hemphadically to repoodiate hall hassistance from hany spirrids or soopernatural beins vatsohever. All I shall 'ave ze honour of showing you will be perform by simple Sloight of 'and, or Ledger-dee-Mang! (*He invites any member of the Audience to step up and assist him, but the spectators remain coy.*) I see zat I 'ave not to-night so larsh an orjence to select from as usual, still I 'ope——(*Here one of the obvious Confederates slouches up, and joins him on the platform.*) Ah, zat is goot! I am vair moch oblige to you, Sare. (*The Confederate grins sheepishly.*) Led me see—I seem to remember your face some'ow. (*Broader grin from Confederate.*) Hah, you vos 'ere last night?—zat exblains it! But you 'ave nevaire assist me befoor, eh? (*Reckless shake of the head from Confederate.*) I thought nod. *Vair* vell. You 'ave nevaire done any dricks mit carts—no? Bot you vill dry? You nevaire dell vat you gan do till you dry, as ze ole sow said ven she learn ze halphabet. (*He pauses for a laugh—which doesn't come.*) Now, Sare, you know a cart ven you see 'im? Ah, zat is somtings alretty! Now I vill ask you to choose any cart or carts out of zis back. (*The Confederate fumbles.*) I don't vish to 'urry you—but I vant you to mike 'aste—&c., &c.

The Man in Evening Dress. I remember giving BIMBO, the Wizard of the West, a guinea once to teach me that trick—there was nothing in it.

First Lady in Plush Cloak. And can you *do* it?

The M. in E. D. (*guardedly*). Well, I don't know that I could exactly do it *now*—but I know how it's done.

[*He explains elaborately how it is done.*

Herr Von K. (*stamping, as a signal that the Orchestra may leave off*). Next I shall show you my zelebrated hillusion of ze inexhaustible 'At, to gonclude viz ze Invisible 'En. And I shall be moch oblige if any shentelmans vill kindly favour me viz 'is 'at for ze burpose of my exberiment.

The M. in E. D. Here's mine—it's quite at your service. [*To his companions.*] This is a stale old trick, he merely—(*explains as before.*) But you wait and see how I'll score off him over it!

Herr V. K. (*to the* M. in E. D). You are gvide sure, Sare, you leaf nossing insoide of your 'at?

The M. in E. D. (*with a wink to his neighbours*). On the contrary, there are several little things there belonging to me, which I'll thank you to give me back by-and-by.

Herr V. K. (*diving into the hat*). So? Vat 'ave we 'ere? A bonch of flowairs! Anozzer bonch of flowairs? Anozzer—*and* anozzer! Ha, do you always garry flowairs insoide your 'at, Sare?

The M. in E. D. Invariably—to keep my head cool; so hand them over, please; I want them.

[*His Companions titter, and declare* "*it really is too bad of him!*"

Herr V. K. Bresently, Sare,—zere is somtings ailse, it feels loike—yes, it ses—a mahouse-drap. Your haid is drouble vid moice, Sare, yes? Bot zere is none 'ere in ze 'at!

The M. in E. D. (*with rather feeble indignation.*) I never said there were.

Herr V. K. No, zere is no mahouse—bot—[*diving again*]—ha! a leedle vide rad! Anozzer vide rad! And again a vide rad—and one, two, dree *more* vide rads! You vind zey keep your haid noice and cool, Sare? May I drouble you to com and dake zem avay? I don't loike ze vide rads myself, it is madder of daste. [*The Audience snigger.*] Oh, bot vait—zis is a *most* gonvenient 'at—[*extracting a large feeding-bottle and a complete set of baby-linen*]—ze shentelman is vairy domestic, I see. And zere is more yet, he is goot business man, he knows how von must hadvertise in zese 'ere toimes. 'E 'as 'elp me, so I will 'elp 'im by distributing some of his cairculars for 'im.

[*He showers cards, commending somebody's self-adjusting trousers amongst the Audience, each person receiving about two dozen—chiefly in the eye—until the air is dark, and the floor thick with them.*

The M. in E. D. (*much annoyed*). Infernal liberty! Confounded impudence! Shouldn't have had *my* hat if I'd known he was going to play the fool with it like this!

First Lady in Plush Cloak. But I thought you knew what was coming?

The M. in E. D. So I did—but this fellow does it differently.

[HERR VON K. *is preparing to fire a marked half-crown from a blunderbuss into a crystal casket.*

A Lady with Nerves (*to her husband*). JOHN, I'm *sure* he's going to let that thing off!

John (*a Brute*). Well, I shouldn't be surprised if he is. *I* can't help it.

The L. with N. You could if you liked—you could tell him my nerves won't stand it—the trick will be every *bit* as good if he only *pretends* to fire, I'm sure.

John. Oh, nonsense!—you can stand it very well if you *like*.

The L. w. N. I *can't*, John. . . . There, he's raising it to his shoulder. JOHN, I *must* go out. I shall scream if I sit here, I *know* I shall!

John. No, no—what's the use? He'll have fired long before you get to the door. Much better stay where you are, and do your screaming sitting down. (*The Conjuror fires.*) There, you see, you *didn't* scream, after all!

The L. w. N. I screamed to *myself*—which is ever so much worse for me; but you never *will* understand me till it's too late!

[HERR VON K. *performs another trick.*

First Lady in Plush Cloak. That was very clever, wasn't it? I can't *imagine* how it was done!

The M. in E. D. (*in whom the memory of his desecrated hat is still rankling*). Oh, can't you? Simplest thing in the world—any child could do it!

Second Lady. What, find the rabbit inside those boxes, when they were all corded up, and sealed!

The M. in E. D. You don't mean to say you were taken in by *that*? Why, it was another rabbit, of course!

NOSTALGIA.

"YOU SEEM OUT OF SORTS, JAMES, EVER SINCE WE 'VE COME NORTH. IT 'S THE CHANGE OF CLIMATE AND SCENERY, I S'POSE!"
"IT 'S WUSS NOR THAT, MARIAR. IT 'S THE CHANGE OF BEER!"

"A HIT! A PALPABLE HIT!"

"OH, I BEG YOUR PARDON! I DID NOT SEE YOU, SIR!"
"SEE ME! CONFOUND IT, SIR, YOU CAN SEE *THROUGH* ME NOW!"

First Lady. But even if it *was* another rabbit, it was wearing the borrowed watch round its neck.

The M. in E. D. Easy enough to slip the watch in, if all the boxes have false bottoms.

Second L. Yes, but he passed the boxes round for us to examine.

The M. in E. D. Boxes—but not *those* boxes.

First L. But how could he slip the watch in when somebody was holding it all the time in a paper bag?

The M. in E. D. Ah, *I* saw how it was done—but it would take too long to explain it now. I *have* seen it so well performed that you *couldn't* spot it. But this chap 's a regular duffer!

Herr V. K. (*who finds this sort of thing rather disturbing*). Lyties and Shentilmans, I see zere is von among us who is a brofessional like myself, and knows how all my leedle dricks is done. Now—*suddenly abandoning his accent*—I am always griteful for hanything that will distrack the attention of the orjence from what is going on upon the Stige; naterally so, because it prevents you from follerin' my actions too closely, and so I now call upon this gentleman in the hevenin' dress jest to speak hup a very little louder than what he 'as been doin', so that you will be enabled to 'ear hevery word of his hexplanation more puffickly than what some of you in the back benches have done 'itherto. Now, Sir, if you 'll kindly repeat your very hinterestin' remarks in a more haudible tone, I can go on between like. [*Murmurs of "No, no!" "Shut up!" "We don't want to hear him!" from various places:* The Man in Evening Dress *subsides into a crimson taciturnity, which continues during the remainder of the performance.*

Mr. Punch's Dictionary of Phrases.

JOURNALISTIC.

"*Inspector —— gives you the impression of a particularly able and open-minded Police-officer:*" *i.e.*, "An easy prey to the interviewing correspondent."

"*It could not, of course, be expected that a particularly shrewd and able young Solicitor would be very communicative about his client's case:*" *i.e.*, "Knew precious little himself, and didn't even offer me a drink."

QUITE THE KOCH OF THE WALK.—The great Berlin Bacteriologist.

ROBERT AT BURN'EM BEACHES.

THEY is still so jolly busy at the "Grand" that I had sum differculty in getting leaf of habsense for Satterday, larst week, for to go with a werry seleck Copperashun Party on a most himportent hexcurshun to Burn'em Beaches about cuttin all the trees down, so that then it woodn't be not Burn'em Beaches not no longer! However, by promisin for to stiek to the "Grand" all thro' the cumming Winter, the too Gentelmanly Managers let me go.

The fust thing as summat staggered me, in a long day of staggerers, was the fack, that all the hole Party had a grand Royal Saloon all to theirselves for to take them to Slough, but my estonishment ceased when I saw that they was Chairmaned by the same "King of good fellers" as took 'em all to Ship Lake on a prewious occasion. They didn't have not no refreshments all the way to Slough, so they was naterally all pretty well harf starved by the time they got there, but there they found a lovly Shampane Lunshon a waiting for to refresh xhawsted Natur, and at it they went like One o'Clock altho it wasn't only arf parst Elewen. Now for the second staggerer! One of the party, a rayther antient Deputty, insted of jining the rest of the Party, declared his intenshun to take his Lunch off the Sunshine which was shining most brillient outside the room, and acordingly off he set a warking up and down in it for three quorters of a hour, without not no wittels nor no drink! till "the King of all good fellers" coodn't stand it not no longer, and sent me out to him with sum sangwidges and a bottel of Sham. He woodn't not touch no sangwidges, and ony took one glass of wine, and told me to put by the bottel for his dinner, which I did in course; but somehows, when he asked for it arterwards, the cork had got out, and the wine had got out, but I thinks I can wenture to say as that not one drop of it was wasted, and werry good it was too.

We then set out on our luvly drive, me on the box-seat of one of the Carridges, and the other pore fellers cramped up hinside. Sumhows or other, weather it was hoeing to the nobel Lunch or not, I don't kno, we lost our way, and found ourselves at larst, not where we all wanted to be, but at a most bewtifool House of call, where they has the werry sensebel custom that, when they thinks as wisiters has had enuff drink, they won't let 'em have not a Drop More, and that is acshally the name by which the ouse is known, both far and wide! Whether it 's a good plan for the howse, in course I don't kno, but Mr. FOURBES, the souper-intendent of the Beeches, says as nothink woodn't injuice 'em to alter the name. Whether that singler custom had anythink to do with it I don't kno, but our party didn't stay there long, and we soon found ourselves at bewtifool Burn'em Beaches.

In course I didn't intrewde myself when they was a settling of the himportant bizziness as they was cum about, so I strolled off to a little willage as I seed in the distance. and which is acshally called Egipt, tho it ain't much bigger than Whetstone Park, Hobern, the ome of my herly birth! From a rayther hurryed conwersashun with a real Native, I gathered the himportant fack that the one reason why all the great big Beach Trees of the Forest had had their tops cut off, was, that OLIWER CROMWEEL wanted the bows for his sojers to carry, so as to make 'em look more than they was when he marched at their Hed to the Seege of Winsor Carsel! What curius and hinteresting hinformashun we can get from the werry humblest of our Feller Creturs when we goes the rite way to git it!

I got back to the Party jest as they had cum to the werry sensebil reserlushun that Nowember was not at all the best munth to see whether Trees was really dead, or was ony shamming, so they determined, like true patriots as they is, to adjourn the matter till the 1st of next April, by which time they woud be able to decide.

On our way back to Slough they all got out to see Stoke Pojes Church, where some great Poet was buried long long ago, who had wrote a most lovely Poem there, all about what could be seen from the Churchyard of an evening, and one of the party said, that the sperrit of the bewtifool seen and of the luvly Poem was so strong upon him, that, if they woud stand round the Toom, he woud try to recite some of its sweetest lines, and he did so, and I heard one on 'em say, as we was a driving back, that more than one among them had his eyes filled with plessant tears as he lissened. Ah, it isn't for a pore Waiter like me to write on these matters, but I hopes as I don't offend not anybody when I says, that praps if jest a leetle more pains was taken for to make us pore fellers understand, and feel, and share in the rapshur as such poems seems to inspire in our betters, it might help to smooth, if not to shorten, the long dreary road as lies between the Hignorant and the Heddicated. ROBERT.

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